

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for supporting communications comprising:  
establishing a communications conference, the communications conference including a plurality of conference participants, each conference participant providing  
5 an audio stream;  
identifying audio data packets in the audio streams;  
mixing audio information from selected ones of the audio data packets to generate a conference audio stream;  
communicating the conference audio stream to the conference participants;  
10 identifying enhanced media packets embedded in at least one of the audio streams; and  
communicating the enhanced media packets to selected ones of the conference participants.
- 15 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein communicating the enhanced media packets to selected ones of the conference participants comprises embedding the enhanced media packets in the conference audio stream.
- 20 3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the selected ones of the conference participants consist of all conference participants except a particular conference participant that embedded the enhanced media packets in a particular audio stream in which the enhanced media packets were received.
- 25 4. The method of Claim 1, wherein communicating the enhanced media packets to selected ones of the conference participants comprises identifying conference participants capable of using the enhanced media packets and communicating the enhanced media packets to the identified conference participants.
- 30 5. The method of Claim 1, wherein each selected one of the conference participants is operable to automatically display an enhanced media window in response to receiving the enhanced media packets.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the enhanced media packets comprise video packets.

7. An apparatus supporting communications comprising:

a controller operable to establish a communications conference, the communications conference including a plurality of conference participants, each conference participant providing an audio stream, to identify audio data packets in the audio streams, to mix audio information from selected ones of the audio data packets  
5 to generate a conference audio stream, and to identify enhanced media packets embedded in at least one of the audio streams; and

an interface operable to communicate the conference audio stream to the conference participants and to communicate the enhanced media packets to selected  
10 ones of the conference participants.

8. The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein communicating the enhanced media packets to selected ones of the conference participants comprises embedding the enhanced media packets in the conference audio stream.  
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9. The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein the selected ones of the conference participants consist of all conference participants except a particular conference participant that embedded the enhanced media packets in a particular audio stream in which the enhanced media packets were received.  
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10. The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein communicating the enhanced media packets to selected ones of the conference participants comprises identifying conference participants capable of using the enhanced media packets and communicating the enhanced media packets to the identified conference participants.  
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11. The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein each selected one of the conference participants is operable to automatically display an enhanced media window in response to receiving the enhanced media packets.

30 12. The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein the enhanced media packets comprise video packets.

13. A system supporting communications comprising:  
a conference bridge operable to establish a communications conference having  
a plurality of conference participants;  
a first conference participant having a first set of media capabilities; and  
5 a second conference participant operable to communicate a message  
identifying a second set of media capabilities associated with the second conference  
participant to the conference bridge;  
wherein the conference bridge is further operable to redirect the message to  
the plurality of conference participants; and  
10 wherein the first conference participant is further operable to determine  
whether the first set of media capabilities and the second set of media capabilities  
both include an enhanced media capability, and to communicate enhanced media  
packets to the second conference participant in response to determining that the first  
set of media capabilities and the second set of media capabilities both include the  
15 enhanced media capability.

14. The system of Claim 13, wherein communicating the enhanced media  
packets to the second conference participant comprises tunneling the enhanced media  
packets in a conference audio stream to the second conference participant.

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15. The system of Claim 13, wherein communicating the enhanced media  
packets to the second conference participant comprises communicating the enhanced  
media packets in an enhanced media communication link to the second conference  
participant.

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16. The system of Claim 13, wherein the conference bridge is further  
operable to redirect the message to selected ones of the conference participants, the  
selected ones of the conference participants including the first conference participant.

17. The system of Claim 13, wherein the second conference participant is  
further operable to automatically display an enhanced media window in response to  
receiving the enhanced media packets.

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18. The system of Claim 13, wherein the enhanced media capability is a video capability and the enhanced media packets comprise video packets.

19. A system supporting communications comprising:  
a packet-based telephony device having a first set of media capabilities and operable to couple to a communications conference; and  
a computing device coupled to the telephony device and operable to receive a  
5 message from the communications conference identifying a second set of media capabilities associated with a remote device, to determine whether the first set of media capabilities and the second set of media capabilities both include an enhanced media capability, and to communicate enhanced media packets to the remote device in response to determining that the first set of media capabilities and the second set of  
10 media capabilities both include the enhanced media capability.

20. The system of Claim 19, wherein communicating the enhanced media packets to the remote device comprises tunneling the enhanced media packets in a conference audio stream to the remote device.

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21. The system of Claim 19, wherein communicating the enhanced media packets to the remote device comprises communicating the enhanced media packets in an enhanced media communication link to the remote device.

22. The system of Claim 19, wherein the conference bridge is further operable to redirect the message to selected ones of the conference participants, the selected ones of the conference participants including the first conference participant.

23. The system of Claim 19, wherein the computing device is further  
25 operable to receive enhanced media packets from the remote device and to automatically display an enhanced media window in response to receiving the enhanced media packets from the remote device.

24. The system of Claim 19, wherein the enhanced media capability is a  
30 video capability and the enhanced media packets comprise video packets.

25. Logic for supporting communications, the logic encoded in media and operable when executed to:

establish a communications conference, the communications conference including a plurality of conference participants, each conference participant providing  
5 an audio stream;

identify audio data packets in the audio streams;

mix audio information from selected ones of the audio data packets to generate a conference audio stream;

communicate the conference audio stream to the conference participants;

10 identify enhanced media packets embedded in at least one of the audio streams; and

communicate the enhanced media packets to selected ones of the conference participants.

15 26. The logic of Claim 25, wherein communicating the enhanced media packets to selected ones of the conference participants comprises embedding the enhanced media packets in the conference audio stream.

20 27. The logic of Claim 25, wherein the selected ones of the conference participants consist of all conference participants except a particular conference participant that embedded the enhanced media packets in a particular audio stream in which the enhanced media packets were received.

25 28. The logic of Claim 25, wherein communicating the enhanced media packets to selected ones of the conference participants comprises identifying conference participants capable of using the enhanced media packets and communicating the enhanced media packets to the identified conference participants.

30 29. The logic of Claim 25, wherein each selected one of the conference participants is operable to automatically display an enhanced media window in response to receiving the enhanced media packets.

30. The logic of Claim 25, wherein the enhanced media packets comprise video packets.



31. A device for supporting communications comprising:

means for establishing a communications conference, the communications conference including a plurality of conference participants, each conference participant providing an audio stream;

5 means for identifying audio data packets in the audio streams;

means for mixing audio information from selected ones of the audio data packets to generate a conference audio stream;

means for communicating the conference audio stream to the conference participants;

10 means for identifying enhanced media packets embedded in at least one of the audio streams; and

means for communicating the enhanced media packets to selected ones of the conference participants.